

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 03 JUNE 2022

1. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Maritime Zones (Economic Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2022. Any activity involving the use of marine renewable energy would be prescribed in the list of economic activities under the Maritime Zones (Economic Activities) Regulations. The terms “deep sea water energy conservation and production technologies” would be replaced by “technologies for energy conversion and production from marine renewable energy resources”. This would allow an activity that uses proven innovative technologies and contribute to energy conversion using thermal and other properties of the sea water as well as production of energy from tides, waves, winds and currents.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Social Contribution and Social Benefits (Industrial Injuries) Regulations 2022 would be promulgated. The Regulations would provide for –

- (a) the employee and/or employer, including self-employed individuals, to furnish to the National Pensions Officer, information and relevant documents, related to industrial injuries sustained and circumstances of these injuries;
- (b) the terms and conditions to effect payment of benefits; and
- (c) the rates of benefits payable in respect of –
 - (i) expenses incurred - transport, first aid required;
 - (ii) Constant Personal Attendance Allowance;
 - (iii) Dependent’s Benefit; and
 - (iv) other benefits incurred - medical, surgical attendances, physiotherapy.

The Regulations shall be deemed to have come into operation as from 01 September 2020 and on 01 September 2021 insofar as it relates to a self-employed person.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the performance of the Export-Oriented Enterprises (EOE) Sector over the period January to March 2022, as compared to the corresponding period in 2021. With regard to the performance of the EOE sector over the year 2021, EOE exports stood at around Rs42.66 billion, as compared to some Rs37.29 billion in 2020. Currently, over the period January to March 2022, EOE exports revolved at around Rs10.93 billion, as compared to some Rs9.38 billion during the corresponding period in 2021.

4. Cabinet has taken note that a Ministerial Committee chaired by the Prime Minister has been set up to look into the development of a High-Tech Pharmaceutical and Biotechnology Industry in Mauritius. The Committee would address all technical and regulatory issues.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the draft Schedule of Commitments of Mauritius in the context of the ongoing Trade in Services negotiations under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The AfCFTA Council of Ministers agreed in January 2022 to extend the deadline to complete the negotiations in the five priority sectors, namely business services, communication services, financial services, transport services and tourism services to 30 June 2022. Mauritius has scheduled commitments in new sub-sectors including Legal Services, Taxation Services, Medical and Dental Services.

The draft Schedule of Commitments would be verified by the AfCFTA Secretariat prior to submission to the 9th meeting of the AfCFTA Council of Ministers scheduled on 01 and 02 July 2022.

6. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius adhering to the Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The aims of the Declaration are to ensure an open and transparent environment for international investment and to encourage the positive contribution multinational enterprises can make to economic, social and environmental progress. The benefits for Mauritius to adhere to the Declaration include the following -

- (a) improved transparency of its investment regimes, which would give comfort to both domestic and foreign investors;
- (b) entitlement to participate along with other adherent countries and the European Commission in the work of the OECD Investment Committee;
- (c) taking advantage of the OECD diagnosis and benchmarking exercises in the course of the review process of the investment climate of Mauritius; and
- (d) improved access to global supply chains.

7. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius would host the 27th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission during the second week of May 2023.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the forthcoming joint re-evaluation of the Mauritius Accreditation Service (MAURITAS) by the African Accreditation Cooperation and the Southern African Development Community Cooperation in Accreditation would be carried out from 13 to 17 June 2022 in Mauritius. The first evaluation exercise was carried out in May 2018 and enabled MAURITAS to achieve international recognition by becoming a signatory member of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement of the International Accreditation Forum and of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation in October 2018.

The exercise would be conducted in the presence of international organisations such as the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation and the International Accreditation Forum which are the two supreme authorities in accreditation at the global level.

9. Cabinet has taken note of actions being taken with regard to the implementation of a Strategy and Action Plan for a New Solid Waste Management and Resource Recovery system in Mauritius, following the feasibility study funded by the *Agence Française de Développement*. The Strategy includes, among others, the setting-up of source segregation of wastes and the setting-up of the regional composting plants and sorting units to be carried out on a Public-Private Partnership basis.

A Request For Proposal is expected to be launched in September 2022 to invite potential project proponents to submit their bids for the setting-up and operation of composting plants and sorting units in the Western and Northern regions of Mauritius on a Design-Build-Own-Operate basis.

10. Cabinet has taken note that in the context of the Metro Express Project Phase 3 from Rose Hill to Reduit, major construction works would be undertaken near the Ebène Recreational Park Roundabout. Consequently, a traffic diversion scheme would be put in place as follows –

- (a) the Rose Hill – Trianon Road (A14) would be closed daily, at night, from 19 30 hours to 05 00 hours; and
- (b) the existing Roundabout near Ebène Recreational Park would be replaced by a cross junction with traffic lights.

The works are expected to start as from Monday 06 June 2022 and would last for six months. The necessary traffic signs would be set up to inform and guide road users.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 533.6 million cases have been reported globally, of which 504.6 million persons have been successfully treated.

With regard to Mauritius, as at 01 June 2022, there were 158 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 13 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 26 May to 01 June 2022, one death was attributed to COVID-19.

Cabinet has also taken note of progress in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, including the administration of the booster dose and paediatric dose in the Republic of Mauritius.

12. Cabinet has taken note that three suspected cases of Monkeypox had been recorded on 01 June 2022. The swabs have been sent to South Africa for testing purposes. Protocols have been worked out in respect of entry at the Airport and the Port as well as for treatment of cases of Monkeypox. Regulations would be made to declare Monkeypox as a notifiable disease.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of two workshops organised and delivered by the Human Rights Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat from 23 May to 26 May 2022. The workshops were on 'Human Rights and Youth Engagement' and 'Business and Human Rights', respectively. Both workshops were facilitated by Dr Shavana Haythornthwaite, Human Rights Adviser and Head of the Human Rights Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance to Ghana where he participated in the 2022 Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group. The Minister participated in various meetings including the Boards of Governors, the Southern Africa Group 1 Constituency, the SADC Ministers with the AfDB President, the Senior management of the AfDB and bilaterals. The 2022 Annual Meetings were attended by over 2,000 participants. The theme of the 2022 Annual Meetings was "*Achieving Climate Resilience and a Just Energy Transition for Africa*", and was aligned with preparations for the United Nations' global climate summit (COP27), scheduled to be held in November 2022.

Mauritius has been appointed in the subsidiary organs of the Board of Governors, namely the Joint Steering Committee and the Governors Consultative Committee, and would chair the Constituency meetings.

The Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance met the Vice-President as well as the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning of Ghana and discussed ongoing cooperation between the two countries.
